

Encyclopedia of Lentils (Masoor Dal) in Islam and Modern Science

Introduction:

Mainly Lentils, known as 'Masoor Dal' in Arabic and Urdu, are one of the oldest cultivated crops in human history. They have been a major source of nutrition since ancient times, providing energy and nourishment to people across the world. In Islam, lentils are mentioned in the Qur'an and were known to be consumed by earlier nations. Modern science also recognizes lentils as a superfood, rich in protein, fiber, and essential minerals. They are a symbol of simplicity, humility, and sustenance in both faith and science.

Lentils in the Qur'an:

Allah mentions lentils in the Qur'an when describing the story of Bani Israel: 'And [recall] when you said, "O Moses, we can never endure one kind of food. So call upon your Lord to bring forth for us from the earth its herbs, its cucumbers, its garlic, its lentils, and its onions."' (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:61). This verse refers to the Israelites' desire for familiar foods like lentils, showing their role as a basic and humble nourishment from the earth.

Symbolic Meaning of Lentils in Islam:

Lentils symbolize simplicity and gratitude. They represent the sustenance that Allah provides from the soil. While the Israelites in the Qur'an desired lentils over divine food (manna and quails), the lesson for Muslims is to appreciate Allah's blessings in all forms — simple or luxurious. Lentils remind believers to value humble foods that sustain life and health, and to avoid arrogance or ungratefulness.

Historical Use in Islamic Civilization:

Throughout Islamic history, lentils were a common part of daily meals. They were used in soups, stews, and bread, providing strength and nutrition for travelers, soldiers, and scholars. In the early Islamic period, lentils were widely cultivated across Arabia, Persia, and Egypt. They were affordable and easy to store, making them an essential part of food security in the desert climate.

Nutritional Value of Lentils:

Modern nutrition identifies lentils as one of the healthiest plant-based foods. They are rich in protein, iron, potassium, and folate, which are vital for muscle growth, blood health, and energy. Lentils also contain high amounts of fiber, which supports digestion and helps control cholesterol and blood sugar levels. Their low fat content and high protein make them an excellent food for maintaining health and preventing diseases.

Health Benefits in Modern Science:

Scientific research shows that lentils contribute to heart health, weight control, and long-term energy. They help prevent anemia due to their iron content and improve gut health through their soluble fiber. Regular consumption of lentils lowers the risk of

diabetes, hypertension, and obesity. Nutritionists recommend lentils as a sustainable and eco-friendly protein alternative to meat.

Lentils and Prophetic Simplicity:

The Hadith mentioned by me in lesson of Lentil (masoor dal) is not accepted by many scholars saying it is fabricated hadith. “Hazrat Wasila رضي الله عنه says that Nabi ﷺ said that pumpkin (القُرْع) and masoor daal (العدس) is also present for you, which was eaten by more than 70 Prophets ... Reference Tabrani: 152.

While the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ teachings encourage eating simple, natural, and wholesome foods. He preferred foods that nourished the body without waste or excess. Lentils fit this principle perfectly — simple, nutritious, and accessible to all. Eating such foods reflects humility and gratitude, values emphasized in Islam.

Environmental Benefits of Lentil Cultivation:

Lentil plants enrich the soil by fixing nitrogen from the atmosphere, improving soil fertility for future crops. This makes lentils environmentally friendly and sustainable. They require minimal water and grow well in dry regions, making them suitable for desert and semi-arid climates like Arabia. Modern agricultural science promotes lentils as a climate-resilient crop that supports global food security.

Scientific and Medicinal Uses:

Lentils are used in traditional and modern medicine for maintaining heart health, improving blood circulation, and strengthening the immune system. They are also known to enhance brain function due to their rich content of folate and magnesium. In some natural medicine practices, lentil soup is recommended for recovery from fatigue and weakness.

Spiritual and Moral Lessons from Lentils:

Lentils teach Muslims the value of humility and gratitude. They remind believers that nourishment and blessings come from Allah, regardless of how simple or plain they may appear. The Qur’anic reference encourages moderation, contentment, and thankfulness for the food that sustains life. Lentils, as a food of simplicity, reflect the spiritual beauty of modest living.

Modern Scientific Reflection:

Today, scientists consider lentils a key food in combating malnutrition and promoting sustainable diets. They are recommended for vegetarians and people seeking balanced nutrition. Lentils’ ability to grow in poor soils and harsh climates highlights Allah’s wisdom in creating foods that can sustain humanity under all conditions.

Summary:

Lentils (Masoor Dal) are one of the most beneficial and humble foods blessed by Allah. Islam recognizes them as part of the natural sustenance provided to mankind, while modern science confirms their immense nutritional and environmental value. Lentils nourish both body and soul, teaching humility, gratitude, and balance. Their presence

in both Islamic scripture and modern health science reminds us that simplicity is often the key to strength and well-being.